ONE MARTYR, TWO PILGRIMAGES: THE COMMEMORATION OF A 12TH-CENTURY BISHOP AS A SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY

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In this paper I will discuss how two spiritual organizations and movements in present-day Finland, the Catholic congregation and the Ecumenical movement, have, during the last 40 years, employed and appropriated the historical memory and narrative tradition concerning the allegedly first bishop in Finland, Bishop Henry, and how they have organized pilgrimages to the commemorative monument erected near the site where the bishop was martyred.

On the one hand, my discussion will focus on the ways in which the appropriation of history and tradition contributes to the creation of a popular religious community, and, on the other, the ways in which the pilgrims' movement in space and time receives its meaning as a movement in society – in other words, as a social movement.

THE MEDIEVAL NARRATIVE OF BISHOP HENRY

According to clerical and popular sources from the 13th and 14th centuries and later – as well as countless Finnish history books which draw on these sources – the first crusade to what is presently known as Finland was made in 1155 by Erik Jedvardsson, the King of Upland, who was later to become the King of Sweden, Erik IX. This was a journey of war, trade and missionary zeal in which Erik was accompanied by an allegedly English-born bishop named Henry (Henrik), who had – according to the legends – recently been nominated the bishop of Uppsala.

The clerical and popular sources also depict how King Erik went back to Sweden, while Bishop Henry stayed on in present-day south-western Finland, in the Turku area, to continue the work of conversion. The next winter, in 1156, Henry was violently killed on the ice of Lake Köyliö, approximately 100 kilometers north of Turku, when returning from a preaching trip to Lower Satakunta, a region of early Christian influence (for this, see HUURRE 1979: 161–163). According to popular sources dating from the 17th century, the killer has been known by the name Lalli, a Finnish man and a resident of the village of Köyliö.

It is beyond our means of scholarship to guarantee the historical validity of these clerical and popular sources. There are thousands of local saints in the world and seventeen of them are known by the name Henrik (LEMPIÄINEN 1989: 22). Except for a liturgi-

cal legend celebrating King Erik, there is no historical evidence whatsoever of a bishop of Uppsala with the name Henry (SUVANTO 1985: 153). There are no contemporary historical records to document the event of the murder or its immediate historical context. The earliest sources that mention Bishop Henry or his killing are more than a hundred years younger than the narrated event, and they were not produced for history writing but for liturgical purposes (PIRINEN 1987: 20). The existing documents, which all date from later periods, are based on the evidence of the liturgical texts. Similarly, the voyage – the so-called first crusade – allegedly made to Finland by King Erik and Bishop Henry finds no authentication from historical documents (SUVANTO 1987).

These are some of the reasons why we must question if there is more fiction than fact in the clerical and popular legends describing the first crusade and the events around the life and death of Bishop Henry. It is possible that the said crusade never took place and that Bishop Henry never existed. In fact, the point of departure for most present-day research into medieval times in Finland is the notion that the country was christianized gradually over the centuries, instead of it having come about from a crusade (e.g. GRÄSLUND 1997: 31).

However, we still have reason to believe that a Christian preacher by the name Henry or Henrik, who was killed in Köyliö or elsewhere in present-day south-western Finland, was once buried in the original wooden church at Nousiainen (SUVANTO 1987: 150–152). Yet, it is also possible that somehow the history of this person has been mixed up with the history of a certain Bishop Henrik of Sigtuna in Sweden, who was killed in exile in 1134 in Scania (Skåne), which is in present-day southern Sweden. It has also been suggested that instead of having been an Englishman, Henry, as his name Henrik in Finnish suggests, was a German monk or priest sent to the Finnish-speaking territories by the archbishopry of Hamburg–Bremen (SUVANTO 1987: 154).

Regardless of whether the story of the killing of Bishop Henry represents the actual historical truth or not, we must acknowledge that its ramifications are quite real. The historical authenticity of the original story can therefore be of only secondary importance compared to its mythological significance, and to the rhetorical and political meaning of the narrated events and their various interpretations.

What is definitely certain about the legend of Bishop Henry and his killing is that the medieval Catholic church in Finland, seated in Turku Cathedral, together with the archbishopric of Uppsala, at some point named Bishop Henry the patron saint of the diocese of Turku and the apostle of Finland. It thus founded a martyr cult for the commemoration of the bishop and the miracles said to have taken place after he died. This, the Catholic church did locally, without any official authorization or canonization from the Pope.

The church also elevated the journey which Erik and Henry allegedly made to Finland to the status of a crusade, thus giving a religious and moral justification to the expansion of Swedish influence and political control in the Finnish-speaking areas. This expansion is directly related to the Swedish interests in warding off both the Danes and the Russians, who were also interested in controlling these areas and collecting taxes from their inhabitants. In this regard it is possible that the life and death of Bishop Henry is a mythical or allegorical narrative composed – with both fact and fiction – and author-

ized by the transculturally oriented Catholic church for the sake of creating a local martyr cult and a cult-centered religious community whose territory could then be administered, taxed, and controlled by the church and by the kingdom of Sweden. In other words, the martyr cult has sacralized the land and through this sacralization legitimated its control (cf. ABRAHAMS 1993: 17). Indeed, there is reason to believe that the creation of the martyr cult for the symbolic construction and consolidation of a religious and civic community may in fact have been more instrumental in the integration of the Finnish-speaking territories into the kingdom of Sweden than any use of the force of arms.[1]

The Catholic St. Henry martyr cult, the first and oldest martyr cult in Finland, was performed and presented mainly in church liturgies, pilgrimages, memorial festivals and church iconography. Illustrations depicting the sea voyage by King Erik and Bishop Henry, the murder scene as well as the encounter between the martyr and the murderer were painted in church walls in many places in Finland, and also in a few places in Sweden.

In Sweden in the 13th century, King Erik was the major saint of the Church of Uppsala (AILI–FERM–GUSTAVSON 1991: 90) and throughout the medieval times the foremost of all patron saints in the country (ÅBERG 1993: 216). A liturgical legend about King Erik was composed, apparently in conjunction with the attempt to have him officially canonized by the Pope. This never happened but he was generally worshipped as a saint in the Nordic churches (ÅBERG 1993: 216). To accompany the Legend of King Erik, a liturgical Latin legend about Bishop Henry was composed in Turku towards the end of the 13th century – apparently for the purpose of legitimating his status as a martyr saint.[2] The Legend of Saint Henry was performed annually in the Turku Cathedral during St. Henry memorial festivals (RINNE 1932; HAAVIO 1948). One of these was on the 20th of January, to commemorate the day of his death, and the other, 18th of June, to commemorate the day when his bones were transferred from the church of Nousiainen to the newly built Turku Cathedral. The transportation of the remains is said to have been taken place in the year 1300, in conjunction with the consecration of the Cathedral as the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Henry.

In addition to the rituals and festivals in Turku Cathedral, one of the main elements in the Bishop Henry martyr cult was the annual pilgrimage which the Church organized to selected places mentioned in the liturgical and popular legends dealing with the bishop's killing. In this, Nousiainen was an important site of ritualization, because the bishop's body is said to have been first buried there, in a church first mentioned in historical documents in 1232. Nousiainen is also the original seat of the diocese. The old wooden church was replaced with a stone church, built according to earlier calculations towards the end of the 13th century, but dated in the most recent study to the mid-15th

[1] A somewhat similar, but ideologically more charged, theory is suggested by the historian Martti Linna, according to whom the legend of the martyr bishop functioned directly in the service of what he calls the Swedish occupation of Finland. The Swedes, according to Linna, ruled by stigmatizing the Finns with the martyr cult and by imposing on them a sense of guilt, which the Finns had to redeem by paying taxes and showing loyalty. The legend, according to Linna, also made it appear that the country was of old a part of Sweden and gave the Swedish conquest and occupation a moral justification. (See LINNA 1996: 201–202.)

[2] For the text in Latin, see e.g. MALINIEMI 1957.

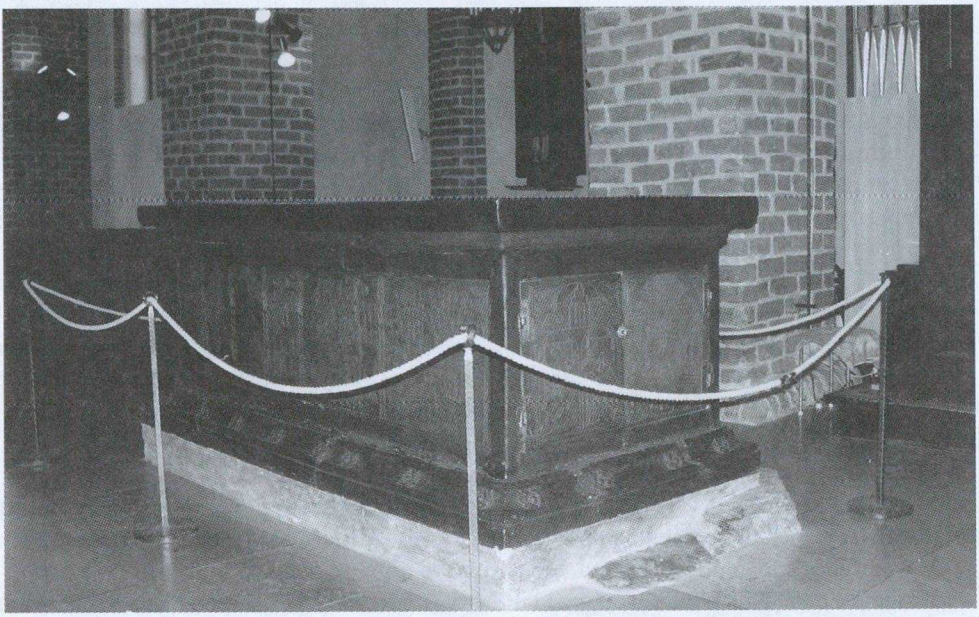

Fig. 1. The Bishop Henry cenotaph in the Church of St. Henry in Nousiainen. Photo by P. Anttonen.

century (HIEKKANEN 1994: 224–225, 250). It is officially named the Church of St. Henry. The alleged original grave of the bishop was replaced by a cenotaph, which was apparently brought from Flanders around 1429 (KLINGE 1983: 49) and decorated with 12 bronze carvings depicting the life and death of Bishop Henry.[3]

Another site of ritualization was a small island in the vicinity of the said murder place in Lake Köyliö. This is where the pilgrim road ended. Archeological findings show that there was a chapel built on this island between 1364 and 1378 and it was used for sacrificial purposes until at least 1422, after which it was gradually ruined because of the rising water level. The chapel was called St. Henry's Chapel and the island, which is today called Kirkkokari (Church Rock), has also been known as Henry's Rock or Saint Henry's island.

For centuries the interpretation of the narrative of the bishop's murder was authorized by the Catholic church. According to many liturgical and clerical sources, Bishop Henry disciplined an impenitent murderer who in return killed him. This emphasizes his

[3] New methods of dating medieval churches have revealed that most of the approximately 100 grey stone churches in Finland are much younger than previously thought. Instead of dating from the period between 1250 and 1520, they are now shown to date from the period between 1430 and 1550 (see HIEKKANEN 1994). On the basis of this it has been suggested that Christianity arrived in Finland with a much slower pace than previously assumed (see DRAKE 1996). According to LINNA (1996: 186), also the St. Henry cult has a later origin than previously believed.

incorrigible paganism, but it has often been also understood to make a statement about the Finns in general: the killing of the first bishop in Finland has signified the primitiveness and backwardness of the Finns vis-à-vis their western neighbors, and indicated their stubbornness and hardheadedness in the reception of Christianity and other western innovations. The killing of the bishop has symbolized the marginality and peripheriality of Finland.

In addition to the church-centered ways of commemoration and ritualization, the legend of the death of Bishop Henry has lived for centuries in the songs and orally transmitted historical narratives of the people living along the old pilgrim road and elsewhere. The major source documenting the popular oral tradition is an epic song called Bishop Henry's Death Song (Piispa Henrikin surmavirsi), which is, according to Matti Kuusi, the best known specimen of oral poetry dating from the Roman Catholic period in Finland (KUUSI et al. 1977: 555). Emphasizing its national significance, Kuusi has called this text "the national legend of Finland" (KUUSI 1963: 307). The oldest of the manuscripts in existence was written down by an unknown person in western Finland in approximately 1671. (See also ANTTONEN 1997: 7–11.)

The Catholic Bishop Henry martyr cult came to an end during the Reformation, which in Finland was a process that lasted approximately one hundred years, between the 1520s and 1620s. In legal terms the Reformation meant the criminalization of Catholicism for indicating disloyalty to the state. In religious terms it meant the Lutheranization of the Christian faith and its followers, the vernacularization of church sermons, and in a quest for religious uniformity the removal of all traces of Catholicism. It therefore meant the end of the Catholic pilgrimages to the ritual sites commemorating Bishop Henry, and as a consequence, gradually over the centuries, the pilgrim road disappeared from the map, from the territory, and from social memory.

TWO PRESENT-DAY PILGRIMAGES

It took 400 years before the Catholic Saint Henry martyr cult re-emerged in Finland. Finland's disconnection from the Swedish state in the beginning of the 19th century and her new status as a Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire gradually led to the liberalization of Catholicism from its legal constraints. The first Catholic congregation in Finnish territory had already been founded in 1799 in Viipuri in "Old Finland", and after 1812, when the Viipuri area was reconnected to the rest of the country, this became the first Catholic congregation of Finland (VUORELA 1989: 22–36). The second congegration was founded in Helsinki sometime in the mid-1850s (VUORELA 1989: 37) and the church, which was consecrated in 1860, was named the Church of St. Henry. The original plan in 1857 was to dedicate the church first to Virgin Mary and then to St. Erik, but St. Henry was chosen because his name had got exposure in the recent celebrations for the 700th anniversary of the first crusade to Finland (VUORELA 1989: 38).

The Catholic church was officially registered as a religious community as late as in 1929, after the constitution of the Republic of Finland in 1919 and the Act on Freedom of Worship passed in 1922 had secured the rights of citizenship to all regardless of the relig-

Figs. 2 and 3. A Catholic mass at Kirkkokari in Köyliö. Photos by P. Anttonen.

ious community to which they were affiliated (HEINO 1997: 16, 70–71). In 1951 the church organized a new pilgrimage to the murder site of their martyr hero, and since 1955 the Saint Henry pilgrimage has been organized annually on the Sunday closest to the 18th of June. As far as I am aware, this is the only Catholic pilgrimage in the Nordic countries today.

Fig. 4. Ecumenical pilgrims carrying a cross along the St. Henry pilgrim road. Photo by P. Anttonen.

The year 1955 marked the 800th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in Finland and, on that occasion, in the wake of a global ecumenical movement, the Lutheran congregation of Köyliö erected an ecumenical monument, a memorial statue, in the honor of Bishop Henry, "The Apostle of Finland" on the small Kirkkokari island close to the said murder place in Lake Köyliö. The Catholic pilgrims hold their mass for their martyred saint every year at the foot of this ecumenical monument.

In addition to the Catholic readoption of their interrupted pilgrimage tradition, the legacy of Bishop Henry has recently been appropriated within an influential ecumenical movement, which has joined the three major churches, the Lutheran, the Catholic and the Greek Orthodox churches, to seek ways in which the different sections of Christianity can cooperate and improve mutual understanding. One of the ways in which this is done is to commemorate and celebrate together Bishop Henry and his role in the Christianization of Finland. Bishop Henry is emphatically a culture hero in the ecumenical movement, the bringer of Christianity to Finland.

The ecumenical movement organizes pilgrimages in the honor of their culture hero, following the original pilgrim route in places where this is still possible. In fact, one of the early impulses for the ecumenical pilgrimage was the discovery of the remains of the original pilgrim route in the 1970s and its establishment as a public hiking track. The ecumenical pilgrimage is called the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage and it is organized by the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage Committee, which is based in Turku and its vicinity.

The main event in the ecumenical commemoration of Bishop Henry is a 7-day pilgrimage from Turku Cathedral first to the Church of St. Henry at Nousiainen and then

Fig. 5. Mr. Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the St. Henry Road Pilgrimage, and Mr. Leo Vanamo, carrier of the pilgrims' cross. Photo by P. Anttonen.

through Yläne and Köyliö to the town of Kokemäki, where Bishop Henry is said to have preached before he was killed. There are pauses for prayers along the way as well as services together with local congregations. The journey finishes at the Kirkkokari island in Köyliö, where a Eucharist in memory of St. Henry is held together with the Catholic pilgrims. The length of the route is 140 kilometers, but only approximately 107 kilometers of the journey are covered on foot. The 7-day pilgrimage is organized every third or fourth year, the first one in 1983, the second in 1989, the third in 1993 and the fourth in 1996. In the intermediary years the ecumenic pilgrimage is one or two days long, extending from Turku to Nousiainen or from Yläne to Köyliö.

The participants in the ecumenical Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage come from all Christian churches in Finland, as well as from other countries such as Sweden, Russia and Germany. The majority of the Finnish participants are Lutherans with an ecumenical world view or an interest in or curiosity about Catholic and Orthodox ways. The pilgrimages therefore, at least partially, exemplify a general present-day trend in which members of the Lutheran church have grown interested in adopting selected traits from the other Christian churches – much because of their feeling that the Evangelical Lutheran church has stripped religion of its iconographic aesthetics. One aspect in this trend is the growing interest in public religious processions, which, in Finland, until recently have only been known among Catholics as well as the Orthodox in the Eastern part of the country and on both sides of the Finnish–Russian border. Lutherans, too, have started to organize religious processions in public places, for instance on city streets.

Fig. 6. Teemu Sippo speaking at the Catholic St. Henry mass in Köyliö and commenting on the local hero cult around the killer of St. Henry. Photo by P. Anttonen.

In addition to the publicity value, both the street procession and the pilgrimage carry psychologically constituted religious value. When I participated in the 1995 ecumenical pilgrimage as an observer, I could infer that travelling, moving between places, is at the same time a physical and a spiritual exercise and as such, conceptualized as a sort of a rite of passage in attaining both a material and a spiritual goal. As a shared experience, the pilgrimage is felt to create – and the participants are rhetorically encouraged by the organizers to feel – a sense of unity and communion, a sense of a moral community which represents in miniature and metonomy the moral community of Christians in general.

For example, according to Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the ecumenical pilgrimage, the greatest reward for the pilgrims is the experience of being connected with one another, eating together, sleeping side by side in the same tents or on the floor of an empty school building, or washing each other's feet in a pond at a resting place (LEHTINEN 1995). Unlike in a prototypical pilgrimage, which is "an ascetic journey of religious obligation to obtain healing and purification" (SOCOLOV 1997: 647), the participants in the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage are brought together by a joint interest in sharing individual religious, physical and psychological experiences. Their sense of community emerges from their joint activities of hiking, devotional services, praying and hymn-singing.

Yet, in addition to collectively shared individual religious and aesthetic meanings, the ecumenical pilgrimage as social action participates in a number of discourses on

religion and society, history, local and national heritage, heritage politics, the construction of "tradition" as a marker of cultural continuity, the relations between the different sections and churches of Christianity, the institutional representation of these churches within the pilgrimage context, the construction of Finnishness and its collective mythologies, the geopolitical positioning of Finnishness in the European context, etc. This makes the pilgrimage a social movement which in many ways is indicative of the late 20th century socio-cultural and political environment and climate.

The annual Catholic pilgrimage to the murder site carries no national or nationalistic significance. One of the many reasons for this is that the Catholic congregation in Finland is small and mostly has foreigners as both members and bishops. The bishops come mainly from Holland and Poland. Another related reason is that from the viewpoint of Protestant nationalism, Catholicism appears as non-national or even disloyal to the nation-state, and within the Finnish Reformation-minded nation-building, especially in the 19th century, people have tended to regard the country's medieval culture and its heritage also as non-national, more or less, as foreign. In fact, one of the most central characteristics in the construction of Finnish national symbols in the 19th century, for example the national epic Kalevala, was to disregard both Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy in the history of the Finnish nation and its collective representations. According to the culture political doctrine of the time, true markers of Finnishness were to be found only when looking beyond the country's Catholic past, to prehistorical antiquity.

The ecumenical movement, on the other hand, has rather strong orientation towards the nationalization of their reading of the Bishop Henry legacy, regardless of the many international participants in their pilgrimages. In fact, there is an openly expressed interest in contextualizing the historical vision of the Bishop Henry tradition with Finnish national culture. For example, in the preface for the booklet which the Saint Henry Road Committee published in 1979 for what was then called the revival of the Saint Henry Road pilgrimage, the Lutheran archbishop Mikko Juva wrote that a pilgrim on the Saint Henry Road does not only follow the oldest Finnish traces of the Christian faith but also the decisive stages of development of the first transition period "in our national history" (SUOMINEN 1979: 3).[4]

In a country which is almost 100 per cent Evangelical Lutheran,[5] and which up to the modern times to a great extent denied or marginalized its Catholic past, the ecumenical movement provides a means with which Lutherans can appropriate the country's medieval Catholic heritage without losing their Protestant nationalist foundation. Within this discursive practice, the Lutheran appropriation of the country's Catholic history selects those aspects and elements which are deemed valuable from a Protestant nationalist perspective and then draws them into a Protestant nationalist reading of the Finnish national heritage. The ecumenical arena provides both a politically designed and an emotionally charged framework for the making of the medieval cultural heritage part of "our national

[4] This can be regarded as being ideologically parallel to the statement made by the folklorist Matti Kuusi, according to whom the Bishop Henry Death Song is "the national legend of Finland" (KUUSI 1963: 307).

[5] The Lutheran homogeneity has gradually decreased during the present century. In 1922, 98,1% of the population was Lutheran, in 1960, 92,4%, and in 1995, 85, 8% (HEINO 1997: 24).

history". For this reason the ecumenical pilgrimage – unlike the Catholic pilgrimage – also succeeds in receiving the attention of the nationally oriented public media. Every year Finnish daily newspapers carry pictures and stories on the ecumenical pilgrimage, but as far as I know, never on the Catholic pilgrimage.

In addition to the national framework the ecumenical pilgrimage operates in the context of localism. One aspect in this is that as a procession through public places, the pilgrimage makes statements about its route and the territories it enters and passes by. On the one hand, the participants may express interest in historical information concerning the areas they are passing through. Hiking through historical sites may even function as a means with which the people link themselves to the territory and the narratives about its history.

On the other hand, there is a growing interest in the St. Henry Road pilgrimage in the municipalities situated along the old pilgrim road, as it provides them with a means to construct part of their local selfhood with the help of the Bishop Henry legacy. In addition to Turku, Nousiainen and Köyliö, the major sites of ritualization, this concerns such places as Rusko, Masku, Mynämäki, Yläne and Kokemäki. The narrative and ritual tradition of the Bishop Henry commemoration provides them with an argumentative context in which they can link their locally anchored historical themes and sites to the making of national cultural history. They can argue for their value as part of the Finnish national heritage.

This link is made explicit most conspicuously with the means of both historical and newly erected monuments. The new monuments are mostly crosses, which serve to indicate a tendency to mark the pilgrim route, along its lengthy course, with a variety of crosses. A cross may stand alone on a field or in the middle of a forest, on top of a medieval grey stone church, or it is carried by hand in front of the group of pilgrims.

This takes us to something that I consider to be one of the major characteristics in the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage. According to Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer, the ecumenical Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage differs from all other pilgrimages in Europe by containing a number of cult sites along the pilgrim road, and by being a cult site "throughout its 150 kilometers' length" (LEHTINEN 1995). It is beyond my knowledge to ascertain the uniqueness of the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage in this respect, but it is true that even the original medieval pilgrim route comprised of a number of important places of ritualization, instead of merely leading to one sacred site at the end of the pilgrim road. Recent decades have witnessed a major increase in these places, as newly established historical and religious monuments, mainly crosses, have been erected or re-erected along or nearby the pilgrim road. One of these ceremonies was held in Yläne in June 1995 (see Fig. 7).

Yet, the crosses erected along the way are not mere religious tokens but landmarks in a discourse which blends history with religion and religion with history. For example in the Yläne case, the erecting of the memorial cross does not only signify religious symbolism but is also expected to convey specific historical meanings and symbols: how the area has been inhabited as early as the Iron Age, how academic research in the area can possibly yield information about ancient residential developments, changes in the topography, the history of agriculture, the diffusion of Christianity, the remains of a possible

Fig. 7. The ecumenical consecration of the Kappelniittu memorial cross in Yläne. Photo by P. Anttonen.

medieval chapel and a cemetary and a prehistorical cultivated field, which are all designed, in a plan by the municipality of Yläne, to become elements in a future history park in the area. (Lehdistötiedote 17. 6. 1995).

By giving prominence to the historical landmarks and by making the visits to these landmarks part of the collective activity of a religious community, the ecumenical pilgrimage does not only combine worshipping with hiking or with a general interest in local history. In other words, the pilgrimage is not only a religious or spiritual experience which gives the participants a chance to join together in hiking, devotional services, praying and hymn-singing in a "historically rich" environment. In addition to this, it seeks to establish more ways to sacralize land and topography within a religious framework that at the same time is a national framework. The tendency to mark more and more places with memorial crosses, which in the Yläne case has been criticized by the Catholics as an unnecessary invention of new traditions (see LAUKAMA 1995), serves as an indication of a history cult in which the honoring of a culture hero functions and operates in the larger context of ritualizing history and historical consciousness. The ritualization of history may be seen as drawing the national into the category of religion (see ANTTONEN 1993; SMART 1983). In this the ecumenical pilgrimage differs greatly from the Catholic pilgrimage.

Yet another aspect that I find worth mentioning here is that, as noted by I. M. Lewis, pilgrimages stimulate economic as well as religious transactions in a wider system of exchange (LEWIS 1991: x–xi). Accordingly, the link between the ecumenical pilgrimage and the nationally significant historical monuments along the way has increasing economic meaning for the municipalities along the pilgrim route, as such a link can be put

Fig. 8. A sweater with a bishop figure and a map of Nousiainen. Photo by P. Anttonen.

on display in saleable and consumable objects, touristic sights and souvenirs. The link between local sites and national heritage also gives these municipalities a competitive advantage in distinguishing them from other local communities in the same region as well as from other regions in the same national unit. In other words, it provides them with a means to construct a recognizable and marketable identity.

In addition to supporting local and national projects or creating a sense of integration with fellow participants, the pilgrimage as a specific genre of social and religious behavior makes a reference to similar pilgrimages elsewhere. Instead of being a uniquely Finnish enterprise, the ecumenical pilgrimage is conceptualized especially by its organizers as part of a network of present-day European pilgrimages, among which probably the best known today is the pilgrimage and the pilgrim road to the grave of St. Jacob at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. The ecumenical pilgrimage shares this network function with its Catholic counterpart, which especially in medieval times was an integral part of the translocal experience of European Catholicism. However, since the ecumenical pilgrimage links religion with the nation, its translocalism is transnational in nature, for which reason its transnational connections signal the "Europeanness" of Finland – as understood within the present-day discourse on European integration. In fact, the original idea to organize an ecumenical pilgrimage in Finland came in the early 1980s from the Vatican supported Europa Wallfahrt Gesellschaft and the German Catholic theologist Gerhard Specht, who had organized pilgrimages in approximately ten European countries after the Second World War.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me make a few additional remarks about the relations between the Catholic and the Lutheran church as regards the ownership of the medieval Christian heritage. I emphasize this because it is the issue of this ownership and the public representations that are authorized with this ownership which makes these pilgrimages movements in society, social movements, in addition to movement in space.

Although there are two pilgrim groups wandering the same roads, there is no real rivalry between the groups. Yet, there is no basis for combining these groups either, to make only one pilgrimage. The two pilgrim groups represent two different approaches to Christianity and a slightly different reading of history and mythology, but there is not enough at stake here politically for any conflicts to emerge. There are possibly more common elements than divergent elements in the two respective readings. For both of them Bishop Henry is a culture hero, the bringer of Christianity to Finland, and as such, a martyr of their religion – a Jesus figure.

Yet, there is also a difference in the symbolic meaning of the two Bishop Henry commemorations. For the Catholics, Bishop Henry is a Catholic martyr hero, and the ritualization of his memory represents a continuation of a long interrupted martyr cult. For the ecumenics, on the other hand, Bishop Henry is an ecumenical symbol, and as such, a symbol of the arrival of Christianity in Finland. In addition, the ecumenical St. Henry Road pilgrimage, as well as the ecumenical commemoration of the Bishop Henry legacy in general, is claimed to symbolize the original unity of the Christian church. It thus represents, at least for some activists, a symbolic "return" to the original undivided Christian church. In some aspects this ecumenical "return" can be interpreted to contest the Catholics' right of ownership to their martyr cult and to the medieval Catholic heritage.

For example, the Evangelical Lutheran church has recently shown a keen interest in emphasizing a direct genealogical link between its archbishop and Bishop Henry. The Saint Henry Road Committee published a booklet in 1979 for the revival of the Saint Henry Road pilgrimage, and the preface was written by archbishop Mikko Juva, who presented himself as "the present occupant of the Bishop Henry seat". (SUOMINEN 1979: 3.) In a similar manner, the present archbishop of the Lutheran Church in Finland, Mr. John Vikström claims in a recently written article that he is the 53rd occupant of St. Henry's bishop's seat (VIKSTRÖM 1997: 9). Accordingly, Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the ecumenical pilgrimage opened his speech at the above mentioned consecration of the Kappelniittu memorial cross in Yläne by addressing archbishop Vikström with the epithet "the 53rd occupant of St. Henry's seat". (LEHTINEN 1995).

In spite of the fact that the local organizational structure of the pre-Reformation Catholic Church was continued in the Lutheran Church to some extent, these terms of address can be understood as indications of a more recent wish to extend the legacy and genealogy of the Finnish Protestant church further back in history, beyond the doctrinal protest of the Reformation (see also FORSBERG 1997: 92). Since the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage is one of the arenas in which this wish is made visible, the two groups

of pilgrims pass through a physical and symbolic territory, a sacred topography, which is in many respects a contested – albeit a discreetly contested – terrain of both society and history.

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